



Cavani, J. (2001) Review of: David Kinloch and Richard Price, *La Nouvelle Alliance*. *Scottish Studies Review*, 2 (1). pp. 129-130. ISSN 1475-7737

Copyright © 2001 Association for Scottish Literary Studies

A copy can be downloaded for personal non-commercial research or study, without prior permission or charge

Content must not be changed in any way or reproduced in any format or medium without the formal permission of the copyright holder(s)

When referring to this work, full bibliographic details must be given

<http://eprints.gla.ac.uk/96735>

Deposited on: 10 September 2014

Enlighten – Research publications by members of the University of Glasgow_
<http://eprints.gla.ac.uk>

Scottish Studies Review

edited by
Robert Crawford and Murray G.H. Pittock

Reviews editor
Valentina Bold

Volume 2 Number 1 • Spring 2001

ASSOCIATION FOR SCOTTISH LITERARY STUDIES

La Nouvelle Alliance: Influences francophones sur la littérature écossaise moderne. Edited by David Kinloch and Richard Price. Grenoble: ELLUG, 2000. ISBN 2 843 10 021 6. 140 French francs pbk.

This French language text is the latest contribution to the series *L'Écosse en questions*, edited by Keith Dixon. The aim of the series is resolutely pluridisciplinary: to provide French university specialists with a critical insight into various aspects of Scottish culture, ancient and modern.

The editors of this new work, David Kinloch and Richard Price, have gathered together a collection of essays by a range of specialist contributors, each sharing the common aim of analysing the influence, both stylistic and thematic, of French and francophone writers on twentieth century Scottish literature.

Various aspects of this 'new alliance' are analysed in a series of comparative studies. The seemingly unlikely association between the work of Hugh MacDiarmid and that of Paul Valéry is examined, as is the influence of Marcel Proust's *À la recherche du temps perdu* on the prose of Neil Gunn, and Sidney Goodsir Smith's use of the work of French symbolist and post-symbolist poets such as Laforgue and Corbière. The historical influence of the French Revolution on the work, sculptural and poetic, of Ian Hamilton Finlay is unpacked. The reception of Kenneth White's work in his adopted French homeland is compared with that in his native Scotland, and the impact of both locations on his unique brand of 'geo-poetry' is analysed. More contemporary Scottish writers come under scrutiny: the similarities in the depiction of working class milieu and narrative voice by Zola and James Kelman; the representation of France in the work of writers such as Alasdair Gray, Liz Lochhead and Janice Galloway, as being, at one and the same time, frighteningly other and historically familiar; and the similarities and dissimilarities between Frank Kuppner's prose and the poetry of Isidore Ducasse. Finally we find a more language-oriented study of the process of transformation that is the translation into Scots of the work of the Québécois dramatist Michel Tremblay. In addition an interesting and useful annexe is provided listing translations into French of Scottish authors from 1900 to 1999.

The reader may not espouse the central tenet outlined by the editors in their introduction: that whereas Scottish artists were precursors of a modernism which was to find its epicentre in Paris following the First World War, Scottish writers cannot claim to have participated in the birth of modernism, nor even to have made it their own at a later date; rather that they prudently followed the French example, to such an extent that a cursory study may lead to accusations of imposture; but that closer examination demonstrates that Scottish writers, while borrowing techniques from the French, adapted them judiciously to suit the specific situation and preoccupations of the Scots. Whether we agree or not, this work would seem a worthy addition to a series aiming to breathe new cultural life into the 'auld' political and military alliance established between Scotland and France in 1295. Perhaps the only real pity is that no English language version exists for anglophone readers. To give the editors the final word: 'Longue vie à la "nouvelle alliance"!'

Jane Cavani

University of Glasgow, Crichton Campus